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Special Troops Battalion torch party arrives home

FORT STEWART, Ga. (May 4, 2008) – The torch party for the Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, came home during an early evening ceremony here today.

More than 60 Soldiers were welcomed back by about 100 friends and family on Cottrell Field. The Soldiers are part of an advanced party that will begin the transition between the battalion's rear detachment command and the deployed command.

Lt. Col. P. Brian Gale II, 3rd ID rear detachment commander, welcomed the Marne Soldiers home, thanking them for their 14 months of service with Task Force Marne south of Baghdad.

"You and your fellow Marne Soldiers secured an area the size of West Virginia, suppressing the violence in that region and denying extremists safe haven," Gale said. "You have also succeeded magnificently in building up the capacities of Iraq. Your names, and the names of the operations you conducted while deployed—Husky, Torch, Slam, Rugged, Pile Driver—are written large in the history of Iraq. Dog-face Soldiers, you have every right to be proud of what you have done."

Task Force Marne is under the command of Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, 3rd Infantry Division commander. The division headquarters is scheduled to begin its redeployment in late spring to early summer.

About 20 Soldiers from the STB already came home on April 9. Their mission is to continue preparing the new 3rd Infantry Division headquarters building for occupation.

Following Gale's welcome and singing the national anthem, the Marne Song and the Army Song, the family members and friends rushed from the parade field's reviewing stands to greet their Soldiers.